



## J. F. Quackenbush

### Where I Have Eaten Moth Wings

"Underbridges, I am Carmelized & sugar powder powered in bowls of  
rain water & nettles. Underbridges, I am your lost

daughter of drought, a draught of dew shine shone loft in the moon  
where I have slept. Underbridges, brittle is the

scent of my wrists, the slits of my eyes shining  
sodium lamps lit behind. Underbridges, whisper me

quiet now where sleeping men may dream the dream  
of this gamine girl's boy body I am & can be for them. Underbridges,

where I have eaten the wings of moths to become them,  
where she & I came like kittens & lay around

her hands & mouth on me her full belly of the milk  
of us. Underbridges, keep it quiet now where

muffled are the foot steps sounding over head  
as on our knees we sing for our...

Underbridges where the scraps of newspaper  
tissues wrapped around sidewalk sold

foodstuffs & bottles come to rest to rest.  
Underbridges will you remember me in years to

come where no longer I can with pretty eyes  
with coal kohl & glassy lips, with the softness of skin

when I can no longer stay on the kindnesses of wicked  
men, Underbridges will you remember me then?

Underbridges, left to my own devices left in the arc light  
left in the gas-fired lungs I have been given to boil

my boiler belly; left with what little cracks my  
fingernails can grow what grows here in the moonlight

Underbridges? How many others? And long until  
the tension of these tense cables above come & tenses me away again?"

**We Are Not Amused**

*for Claudia Sherman*

So I imagine it with birds like rooks  
like lifted with their heads sort of birdy  
and all black feathers blooming out odd angles

like lion manes maybe some maybe not but theriomorphic  
for sure it would be that way as Gemini wonder twins we

back to back in some long hallway  
interiors by George Lucas as an undergrad yeah  
so THX of us it would be.

And there so the sole of my left boot braced  
back up against yer right spike hell  
knees triangulating Hermes Trismegistus

whistles slow born now. Now and now in clove haloes  
cedar smoke in the portrait as its pictured in it yer all in white  
and I'm chartreuse and not like you're voluptuous

in white not I'm not this mountain grizzly grinning  
jack o lanterns out out but we're rather androgyne  
a Todd Haynes T. Rex concert film of names

the photonegatives of another history.  
But what I'm saying is that, Janus, us like sugar  
melting slow on low heat and wispy whispers beneath

the boil where it simmers I can tell  
our skulls now grown together, us leant back  
back to back like Siamese babies

bred for futures on an international exchange.  
So take it like this, like I'm the girl and you're the boy  
like nothing ever changes

like the audience will never know x  
from y nor z in four dimensions as we've painted  
as all the boys you will caress will

sigh in alabaster scars on high cheek  
bones the shapes of tear streaked violins

remember that those fingers bled  
might begin again again the girls that I will  
kiss all anisette lips & verbena hips

against the oars of autumn nights that came along  
against our other angels looking on beyond.

**It doesn't take much**

*For Courtney Schrey*

to with tobacco stains and  
gelatin coax out those small  
wet tendrils like they might.  
but no never mind how that goes

and also, hair like copper reins  
that patters quiet not quite pennies  
still those are nickels; nifty how  
with weights and sand dollar houses

how we, on beaches, fifty miles distant,  
might still be three thousand and more  
it's not yet what the Brits call millions  
but milled this way out of a solid block

kept lubricated and well tightened  
now where machined it's been  
laid out and lathed like lisps  
on her kitten lips lilt whisper

songs in too soon wilted branches branches bent  
like Hokkaido house plants planted  
now plaits of them the haiku of plaited  
in her unsubtle machine undressing. dress up

her leaves now fall the way where  
left they might be letters  
to the girl I know she was before  
we met and making mainland

Chinese characters now the skin stiffens  
slightly at the corners of these  
corridors all sated Andalusian  
summer flowers, pill box wilted

lady slippers held in situ  
gloved like one of her gowns  
of antique guild-sewn gilt in glitter  
worn kilts to the waist where wasted.

Bare breasts and skin slippery  
with salt and potassium so thick  
it glows in the dark undersea places  
where spilled heavy water displaced

by the process might be found again. But no  
but hi but hello but hello again but maybe but tomorrow  
but maybe but baby I am burnt out thickets quick  
with new growth come green again in spring time till

til now til then and ever i shall wait there,  
the green man growing hemlock  
horns and spider veins  
spilling mosslocked saliva suet black  
with bile and some other humor or another

still now laughing lately, I in quiet here  
asleep still here in soft underbellies, green  
where rain shadows cast in boot printed faces  
filled with rain water washes

my white fingers cold to prune the skin  
still splits as the water logs waits her waists  
and shiny grey overcast reflecting in the boot heel  
so awaits so softly her here where here the roots might grow  
her softly down to sleep her through winter here  
still and grows those grown some some more.